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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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SUBJECT: "FORTNIGHTLY FOOD-SHOPPING TIPS. "Information from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and the Consumers' Counsel, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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Once again, here are tips for the family food-shopper direct from the U. S. Department of Agriculture. These tips on supplies and prices of foods coming on the market are to help you plan meals and take advantage of low prices.

First tip is about fresh vegetables. You'll find more vegetables for sale the next few weeks. By the middle of June supplies will be larger than a year ago. For the next week or so your market should have plentiful supplies of green snap beans and fresh asparagus, but not so many tomatoes, green peppers, green peas and cucumbers as markets had this time a year ago. But in June the heavy movement of vegetables to market sets in. And then you can expect large quantities of most vegetables for several months. As for the price of vegetables, every housewife knows that ordinarily vegetables are cheapest in summer because supplies are large, and because vegetables are growing close to where they are selling, instead of coming in from distant points.

Beans and tomatoes are 2 vegetables making the headlines these days because they have been chosen to take a special part in the Government's defense efforts. The U. S. Department of Agriculture has asked farmers to grow many more beans for drying and tomatoes for canning. Some of these are for use by our Army and Navy, for the Red Cross, for relief, and for export under the Lend-Lease Act. Defense food needs include not only more canned tomatoes and dry beans but also more poultry, pork and dairy products. Whether this means that your family will have



more of these different foods because of increased production depends on several things. It depends on how much more is produced. And it depends on how much is exported and used for relief. It also depends on how high a price level the Government supports.

Another vegetable making headlines these days in the new potato. Lots more new potatoes will be coming to market the next few weeks. The States shipping new potatoes in May and June are having a record crop this year--16 percent more than last year. The season for old potatoes is drawing to a close, but the remaining supplies of old potatoes are relatively large. The price of old potatoes usually goes up this time of year. Prices aren't likely to go up much this year because there are so many new and old potatoes.

Now here's a note on strawberries. Right along now is the high point of the strawberry season. This is the time berries are most plentiful and lowest in price. Better indulge your family in strawberry shortcake and strawberry ice cream right now. And if you're going to buy berries for making preserves, better do it while prices are down.

Now from fruit news let's turn to meat news. The news is: Much more beef than last year, more lamb, but considerably less pork. More beef and more lamb will be coming to market from now through October. Usually more pork comes to market this month, but probably this year supplies on the market won't increase. In spite of the good supply of meat for sale, prices will continue to be above last year's. You can expect the price of pork to go higher than usual this summer, and the price of beef not so high. Lamb prices usually are highest in June and then go down.

So much for meat. Now about eggs. You can expect about the same amount of eggs on the market this summer as last summer. Supplies of eggs get smaller each





month until November. The price of eggs has been unusually high this spring, and the result is that farmers have been hatching many more chickens. These chickens won't start laying eggs until next fall. So the full effect of the egg-price supporting program won't be felt for some time yet. Right now, the program is helping to keep production up to last year's in spite of the fact that the country has fewer laying hens.

Now for news of dairy products. Here again higher prices have pushed up production. In fact, higher prices this year have resulted in a record production of milk. Government purchases of cheese and evaporated milk have had considerable to do with the rise in both price and production. But speculative buying of butter for storage has also pushed up prices. Buyers are purchasing butter believing that Government purchases of cheese and evaporated milk will cut down the amount of milk for butter making and eventually result in higher butter prices in the fall and winter. This buying and storing butter has kept the price of butter up for this time of year. Prices of all dairy products have gone up since March, and that is contrary to the usual trend for this time of year.

The last tips today are about a couple of our most popular fruits. First, about cantaloups. Cantaloup season has opened, and more and more of this fruit will be coming to market until August. But up until July supplies won't be large. In July you can get set to indulge yourself in cantaloups, for that month will have many more cantaloups than a year ago. Last tip of all: Peach growers are expecting a great big crop this year.

That concludes the food-shopping tips for today.

